

FY 2009 appropriations to continue operations of the Federal Government through March 6, 2009, for projects and activities not otherwise covered in the full-year bills. This Act lifts the legislative moratoria on oil and gas leasing on significant portions of the Outer Continental Shelf and the prohibition on the completion of regulations for commercial leasing of oil shale, which will allow us to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

I am disappointed that the Congress passed a long-term continuing resolution. There is much work to be done, and the Congress should not adjourn for the year without finishing important business on spending, taxes, and free trade agreements.

Finally, this legislation contains certain provisions similar to those found in prior appropriations bills passed by the Congress that might be construed to be inconsistent with my Constitutional responsibilities. To avoid such potential infirmities, the executive branch will interpret and construe such provisions in the same manner as I have previously stated in regard to similar provisions.

George W. Bush

The White House,
September 30, 2008.

NOTE: H.R. 2638, approved September 30, was assigned Public Law No. 110–329.

Message on the Observance of Eid al-Fitr

September 30, 2008

I send greetings to Muslims everywhere celebrating Eid al-Fitr, the Festival of Breaking the Fast.

During the three-day festival of Eid al-Fitr, Muslims celebrate the completion of their fast and the blessings of a renewed faith. On this special occasion, families and friends around the globe gather to share traditional foods and congratulate each other on meeting the test of Ramadan.

Our Nation has millions of citizens who practice Islam, and our country benefits from their many contributions. This holiday is also an opportunity for Muslims to reflect on Islam's vibrant culture, which has enriched civilization for centuries.

Laura and I send our best wishes. Eid Mubarak.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Proclamation 8296—To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act and For Other Purposes

September 30, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Section 213A(b) of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (19 U.S.C. 2703a(b)) (the “CBERA”), as amended by section 15402(a)(2) of the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act of 2008 (part 1 of subtitle D of title XV of Public Law 110–246, 122 Stat. 2289) (the “HOPE II Act”), provides that preferential tariff treatment may be provided for certain apparel and other articles originating in Haiti that are imported directly from Haiti or the Dominican Republic into the customs territory of the United States.

2. Pursuant to section 213A(f)(3) of CBERA (19 U.S.C. 2703a(f)(3)), as redesignated by section 15403(2) of the HOPE II Act (122 Stat. 2302), apparel and other articles described in section 213A(b) of CBERA that are shipped from the Dominican Republic to the United States directly or through the territory of an intermediate country shall not qualify for the preferential tariff treatment provided for under section 213A(b) until the President certifies to the Congress that Haiti and the Dominican Republic have developed procedures to prevent unlawful transshipment of the articles and the use of counterfeit documents related to the importation of the articles into the United States.

3. I have determined, and hereby certify, that Haiti and the Dominican Republic have developed the procedures described in section 213A(f)(3) of CBERA.